



Idaho Perinatal Project

The Idaho Perinatal Project is concerned about you and your baby's health, during your pregnancy and at the time of delivery. Following is information about different types of providers that you may want to care for you while you are pregnant. This information will help you understand the difference in providers' training and education. We have also included 10 questions for you to ask your potential health care provider, to help you make the best choice for you and your baby.



What You Should Know About Care Providers

Obstetrician:

A medical doctor who has advanced training in pregnancy and women's health care. Obstetricians provide prenatal care and - perform deliveries for low- and high-risk women, including c-sections, if needed. Many, of their patients are pregnant women since this is an area in which they specialize. Obstetricians are licensed by the state with advanced training and hospital affiliations.

Family Medicine Physician:

A medical doctor who has the training and education required to care for the whole family. Family medicine physicians may provide prenatal care and deliver babies, usually when there are no complications. In some cases, a family practitioner will refer a pregnant patient to an obstetrician.

Certified Nurse Midwife:

A registered nurse with advanced training and education to provide prenatal care and perform uncomplicated deliveries. Certified nurse midwives are usually associated with an obstetrician that can assist with problems or complications, and often perform deliveries in hospitals. Certified Nurse Midwife are also licensed by the state.

Certified Professional Midwife:

A person trained and certified in the care of pregnant women. Certified professional midwives perform low-risk deliveries at clinics or at home. They must pass a test to become certified.

Lay Midwife:

A person who does deliveries at the pregnant woman's home, or at their clinic. There is no standardized training or certification required to become a lay midwife, and so there is no specific standard of care for their pregnant patients.



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Choosing a Health Care Provider: 10 Important Questions to Ask

Use this list to help you choose a health care provider that is right for you and your baby.



1. How long have you been delivering babies? How many babies have you delivered?
Where do you perform deliveries?
2. What type of training and education do you have in the area of pregnancy and delivery?
3. If there is an emergency, do you do c-sections, or do you refer to someone else?
If you refer, to whom do you send your patients?
4. If you perform deliveries at home, where do your patients with complications or problems go?
Do you go to the hospital with your patient?
5. Who covers for you when you are not available?
6. How much experience do you have caring for women with high-risk pregnancies?
7. What procedures do you use to manage pain for the comfort of women in labor and delivery?
8. Who takes care of the baby right after delivery? If you do, and there are problems,
what happens then?
9. Do you provide routine procedures for the baby, such as newborn hearing screening
and metabolic screening?
10. Can you admit your patients to a hospital? If so, which hospital or hospitals do you
admit your patients to?

If you are pregnant, make an appointment as soon as possible to meet your potential health care provider. To help make the best choice for you and your baby, ask lots of questions, including the 10 listed above. If you need more information, or have questions, visit the Idaho Perinatal Project website at www.idahoperinatal.org or call us at (208) 342-7642.